

REMARKS

It is initially noted that the above amendments to the specification are not necessary for U.S. practice. However, in the corresponding PCT International Application, the Examiner requested the above changes to the specification, and in order to keep the U.S. application consistent with the corresponding foreign applications, the above amendments in the U.S. application are also made. No new matter is involved.

Somewhat similarly, the changes in the claims make the U.S. claims consistent with changes to be made in the corresponding foreign applications and are made to more specifically define the invention. In this regard, it will be noted that claim 1 has been changed from a product-by-process claim to a conventional process claim. As the International Examiner noted, the originally presented main claim 1 does not distinguish the product by the method used, and in order to make that claim more clear, claim 1 has been changed to a conventional method claim. Further, claim 1 has been changed to more specifically define the invention in that the claim is now cast in Jepson form and recites the present invention in the improvement clause of that Jepson form claim. More specifically, claim 1 has been amended to particularly identify the invention by reciting the gases used in the gaseous plasma according to the disclosure in the specification at page 6, paragraph [0037]. It was, of course, quite surprising that these so-called inert gasses could have such a profound effect as that demonstrated by the working examples in the specification.

The dependent claims have also been changed to method claims, and redundant material has been deleted therefrom.

Claims 16-18, which recited the results of the present invention, have been canceled as being superfluous. Somewhat similarly, claims 25-33 were, in part, redundant and, in part, superfluous. Those claims have likewise been canceled.

CONCLUSION

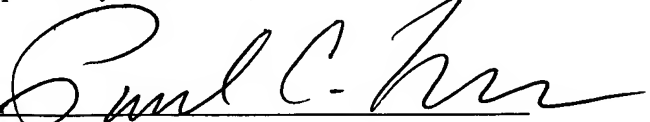
Accordingly, it is believed that the claims are now in good condition for examination, and an early and favorable reply by the Examiner is most respectfully requested.

Further, if the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the offices of Birch, Stewart, Kolasch & Birch, LLP.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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